



TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS REPORT

20TH EDITION



JUNE 2020

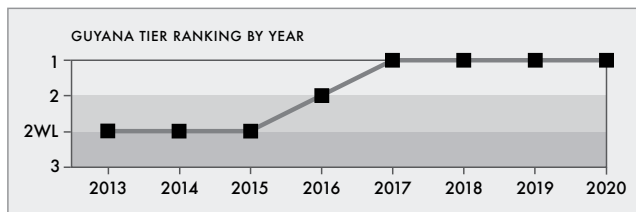


lesser extent Mali, Guinea, and The Gambia—for forced begging in exploitative *daaras*.

Traffickers force Bissau-Guinean boys into street vending and forced labor in the agricultural and mining sectors in Senegal, especially in the southern cities of Kolda and Ziguinchor. Traffickers force West African boys to harvest cashews during Guinea-Bissau's annual harvest, and some are recruited for work in the harvest but then are forced to beg. Traffickers exploit some Guinean boys for forced labor in shoe shining in Guinea-Bissau. Traffickers exploit Bissau-Guinean girls in sex trafficking and forced labor in street vending and domestic work in Guinea, The Gambia, and Senegal, as well as in Spain. Senegalese trafficking networks recruit Bissau-Guinean girls for modeling jobs or traveling football clubs but subject them to sex trafficking. Bissau-Guinean girls are exploited in domestic servitude and in sex trafficking in bars, nightclubs, and hotels in Bissau. Bissau-Guinean girls from the Bijagos—and to a lesser extent mainland girls and boys—are exploited in child sex tourism in the Bijagos, an archipelago off the coast of Guinea-Bissau that is far from the mainland and largely devoid of government and law enforcement presence. Although the extent of child sex tourism is unknown, it is widely acknowledged among civil society, NGOs, and mid-level government officials. In most cases, French nationals own hotels on the islands and use Bissau-Guinean intermediaries to exploit island girls aged 13 to 17 years old for French and Belgian child sex tourists. International sources report these same hotel owners provide jobs and significant support to the island community, wielding influence that can deter victims from notifying law enforcement. Some families may encourage their children to endure such exploitation for financial gain. Bissau-Guinean men from the mainland fuel local demand for commercial sex on the islands. During previous reporting periods, there were reports of official complicity in human trafficking among island officials and in the judiciary.

GUYANA: TIER 1

The Government of Guyana fully meets the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. The government continued to demonstrate serious and sustained efforts during the reporting period; therefore Guyana remained on Tier 1. The government demonstrated serious and sustained efforts by completing a draft amendment of the Combating Trafficking of Persons Act, sentencing a convicted trafficker to a total of 15 years imprisonment, drafting a national action plan to eliminate child labor, completing standard operating procedures for investigating and prosecuting trafficking cases, and opening its first trafficking shelter outside of the capital area. Although the government meets the minimum standards, it investigated and prosecuted fewer suspected traffickers, identified fewer victims of trafficking, and did not provide adequate screening or shelter for child and male victims. There are insufficient labor inspectors and their training in human trafficking is inadequate.



PRIORITIZED RECOMMENDATIONS:

Implement and train law enforcement officials and front-line

responders in written trauma-informed victim identification and referral procedures. • Reduce delays in court proceedings and pretrial detention of suspects. • Fund specialized victim services, particularly for child, adult male, and Venezuelan victims in their native language. • Vigorously investigate and prosecute sex and labor trafficking cases under the TIP Act, including those involving child victims. • Hold convicted traffickers, including complicit public officials, accountable by investigating, prosecuting, convicting, and imposing sufficiently stringent sentences. • Hold police and law enforcement officials accountable for abuse of vulnerable individuals and intimidation of victims in shelters. • Provide additional protection for victims to testify against traffickers in a way that minimizes re-traumatization. • Strengthen the capacity of labor inspectors to identify and refer victims of labor trafficking. • Track and report data on trafficking cases reported to the trafficking hotline and by labor inspectors. • Execute and publish a robust monitoring and evaluation framework for anti-trafficking policies and efforts. • Engage with officials involved in anti-trafficking activities in other countries to exchange best practices in trafficking investigation and screening, including ways to maintain shelter location confidentiality.

PROSECUTION

The government maintained minimal law enforcement efforts. The Combating Trafficking of Persons Act of 2005 (TIP Act) criminalized sex trafficking and labor trafficking and prescribed penalties of three years to life imprisonment. These penalties were sufficiently stringent and, with respect to sex trafficking, commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. The government finalized an amendment to the TIP Act to specifically remove the requirement of force, fraud, or coercion in the trafficking of children. The Ministry of Social Protection (MoSP) was the lead agency responsible for coordinating trafficking efforts, overseeing the Counter-Trafficking Unit, and participating on the government's Ministerial Task Force on Trafficking in Persons (Task Force). In 2019, the government reported 27 new investigations (25 for sex trafficking and two for labor trafficking), a decrease from 30 new investigations in 2019 and 4 in 2018. Police made 55 arrests in cases of sex trafficking and labor trafficking and continued investigations in 19 trafficking cases initiated in 2018. The government reported three new prosecutions of suspected traffickers in 2019 (one for sex trafficking and two for labor trafficking), a decrease from 11 prosecutions in 2018 and 17 in 2017. Authorities convicted one trafficker for sex trafficking of a minor and an adult female, compared with one conviction in 2019. The court sentenced the convicted trafficker to 10 years' imprisonment for trafficking a minor and an additional five years for trafficking an adult victim, or 15 years total. The government did not report any new investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in trafficking offenses, although the government screened Venezuelan women and children who experienced human rights abuses, including sexual exploitation by government officials. The government reported that the appeal of a 2017 case in which the government required the trafficker to pay restitution without imprisonment, a penalty inconsistent with the law, was still pending at the end of the reporting period. Observers noted there were frequent, widespread reports of physical and sexual abuse of children and allegations that some police officers could be bribed to make such cases "go away". The government did not report on the appeal of a former police officer convicted of sex trafficking and released on bail in 2016, still pending at the end of the reporting period. The government added immigration officials at major transit points to screen all arriving and departing migrants. Despite training for some judicial, prosecutorial, and law enforcement officials, trafficking and other major criminal prosecution cases took an average of two years in process and pretrial detention averaged three years. The government trained 221 law enforcement officers on trafficking victim identification and referral procedures and 48

judicial officers on standard operating procedures for prosecuting human trafficking cases with the assistance of international organizations during the reporting period.

PROTECTION

The government maintained inadequate efforts to protect victims and identified fewer victims, despite an increase in Venezuelan refugees. Victim assistance remained a serious concern, especially in areas outside the capital and for Venezuelan child and male victims. In 2019, the government identified 102 victims (63 sex trafficking and 39 labor trafficking), a decrease from 156 identified victims in 2018 and 131 in 2017. The victims came from Guyana as well as the Dominican Republic, Haiti, and Venezuela. Ninety-five were female and seven male, with 10 minors. Three were referred by an international organization. The government referred 99 out of 102 victims to shelter and 98 to protective services, compared with 93 out of 131 victims in 2018. It is not clear if victims received individualized care plans. Due in part to the noticeable increase of victims from Venezuela, the government began work on standard operating procedures to identify and refer trafficking victims for protection with assistance from an international organization but did not adopt them by the end of the reporting period. The government provided 60 million Guyanese dollars (GYD) (\$279,070) to NGO-managed shelters providing housing for adult female victims of gender-based violence and trafficking in 2019, the same amount provided in 2018. Victims could receive shelter, food, training, and psychological therapy. The government also provided 2 million GYD (\$9,300), a decrease from 3.5 million GYD (\$16,280) last year, in direct financial assistance to victims who chose not to stay in a shelter. Authorities opened the first shelter for trafficking victims outside the capital. There were inadequate trafficking shelters for male or child trafficking victims; few provided trauma-trained staff or long-term facilities. MoSP provided intake counselling to child victims whom it placed in shelters co-managed with NGOs. MoSP placed some children into foster care or reintegrated them with their families, while authorities placed adult male victims at non-specialized night shelters on an ad hoc basis.

To protect victims' privacy and identities, some human trafficking cases were heard in camera, and the government strongly advised the media to avoid taking photos of the victims. Observers reported police and other authorities intimidated some victims into staying at shelters against their will, did not allow family visits until trials were completed, and cut short some victims' phone calls if they spoke in their native language. The government reported victims could leave shelters at will, although occasionally measures were necessary to prevent victims from giving out shelter locations. MoSP provided protection and counseling for child victims, and one of the NGO shelters provided counseling for adult victims, accommodation for up to six months, and training to help develop self-sufficiency. The MoSP funded transportation costs and police escorts for victims staying outside a shelter who were willing to attend court proceedings and granted deportation relief to 135 foreign victims. The government reported granting foreign victims temporary residence status and work permits if requested. The government reported facilitating the repatriation of one Guyanese national trafficked abroad, to whom it provided counseling and reintegration assistance.

PREVENTION

The government increased efforts to prevent trafficking. The Task Force met monthly and initiated several activities including an awareness campaign and training events. As part of implementation of the national action plan against trafficking, the Task Force initiated a review of the TIP Act with NGOs and the international donor community. The government reported drafting an amendment to remove the requirement for force,

fraud, or coercion in child trafficking, but this was not adopted due to the restrictions of constitutional authority on the caretaker government. The Ministry of Public Security conducted a one-day training session for education guidance counselors and welfare officers in identifying trafficking indicators. The Task Force also awarded a consultancy contract for the drafting of a code of conduct for the Task Force and a human trafficking training manual. The government monitored human trafficking in the country and released the results of monitoring in the media. The government reported that 25 hotline calls resulted in trafficking investigations during the reporting period. The government did not make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts. Labor officers frequently conducted impromptu visits to work sites and business premises in the mining and logging districts and capital city to investigate suspect labor practices and possible violations. The government drafted a National Action Plan to Eliminate Child Labor to deal with challenges in recruiting, retaining, and training labor inspectors to more effectively monitor child labor and extractive industry workers, particularly in light of Guyana's fast-growing oil operations where children are particularly vulnerable to forced labor. Authorities reported six child labor violations; citations were issued for two child labor violations in the extractive and service industries, and criminal charges were filed in the two cases of child sex trafficking. The government did not report whether the criminal charges were filed under the TIP Act, the Protection of Children Act, or the Employment of Young Persons and Children Act; the latter two laws have lesser penalties than the TIP Act.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE

As reported over the last five years, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Guyana, and traffickers exploit victims from Guyana abroad. Women and children from Guyana, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Suriname, and Venezuela become sex trafficking victims in mining communities in the interior and urban areas. The government notes a large increase in the number of trafficking victims from Venezuela. Authorities identified child victims of sex trafficking as well as forced labor in the fast-growing extractive and service industries. Traffickers exploit victims in labor trafficking in mining, agriculture, forestry, domestic service, and in shops. While both sex trafficking and labor trafficking occur in remote interior mining communities, limited government presence in the country's interior renders the full extent of trafficking unknown. Traffickers exploit Guyanese nationals in sex and labor trafficking in Jamaica, Suriname, and other Caribbean countries.

HAITI: TIER 2

The Government of Haiti does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period; therefore Haiti remained on Tier 2. These efforts included investigating more traffickers, establishing an executive secretariat to improve monitoring and analysis of trafficking within the National Anti-Trafficking Committee, addressing the weak judicial system and lack of awareness about trafficking among law enforcement officials with targeted training, prosecuting labor trafficking offenses, and building capacity for alternative shelters for vulnerable minors. However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas. The government did not convict traffickers during the reporting year. The government did not allocate sufficient funding for its anti-trafficking efforts or victim services and did not implement its standard operating procedures for victim identification. The government did little